

29 July 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. FRANK G. WISNER

SUBJECT : Rand Report

1. To arrive at an opinion as to the desirability of launching a satellite vehicle for reconnaissance as proposed in the Rand Report involves three basic considerations:

- a. Feasibility.
- b. Estimate of effort required.
- c. Value of benefits.

2. Since all three of these considerations are, at this stage, matters of opinion, we have obtained the opinions of a group of leading scientists and engineers to supplement our own findings. This group includes DuBridge, Bacher, Lauritsen, Greenstein, Killian, Hall, Watson, Zacharias and Wiezner.

3. All concerned agree that it is possible and feasible to construct a rocket to be propelled at sufficient speed to place it in a suitable orbit around the earth with the development of existing knowledge. Likewise, all agree that it is feasible to equip the rocket with power plant, control, television, etc. by development of existing knowledge. There is definitely a question, however, as to the possibility of ever being able to obtain recognizable images of objects of a size less than 100 ft. at the proposed orbit distance of say 350 miles.

4. Although such a rocket and its equipment are considered to be feasible, the task of bringing it into being should not be under-rated. It would require a major effort, we estimate, of 6 to 8 years in time and between a half and a billion dollars of 1952 dollars, with corresponding absorption of critical technical manpower.

5. The benefits to be derived from the existence of a number of satellites giving us pictures of the order of resolution of 100 ft. is largely a matter of speculation. It will give us some weather information and some area intelligence which is somewhat beyond our province to evaluate, but we wish to point out that better reconnaissance and better

information could be obtained with far less effort and cost by, for instance, high flying jets (flight at 50,000 ft. altitudes is now possible and at such altitudes, detection is very unlikely).

6. We realize that it can be argued that over-flying a nation is a breach of neutrality, on the other hand, the launching of a satellite which will some day come back to earth in anybody's country may be considered to be a breach of international law--at any rate, it may be ammunition for propaganda.

7. We have no way of evaluating psychological value or effects, and must leave this phase to others. We do believe, however, that the Agency should give consideration now to this aspect of the project to be prepared for future developments.

8. Based on our knowledge and experience, we do not recommend the project be started at this time, but believe study should continue, especially along the lines which will be useful in general rocket motor development and instrumentation. //

9. It is our present understanding that the Air Force has not abandoned the project, and there seems to be no call for this Agency to carry the project. //




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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

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2 ADNE		14 Aug.
3 AD SI		23 Aug.
4 AD R/R		27
5 Exec. Reg.		
FROM		DATE
1 DDI		2/11
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REMARKS:

re our recent talk in Putnam

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Officer designations should be used in the "TO" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "TO" column. Each officer should initial (check mark insufficient) before further routing. This Routing and Record Sheet should be returned to Registry.

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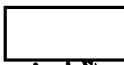
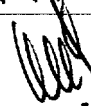





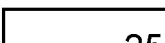

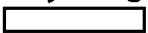
OTS/DD/P - 2-c-71 Quarters I

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DATE

JUL 29 1952

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS
		REC'D	FWD'D		
1. Mr. Wisner	226 Admin.		30 July		DDCI: 25X1
2. DDCI					Pursuant to your suggestion, Admiral  and Dr.  have examined  into the question of the feasibility and effectiveness of a satellite vehicle. You will recall that this was a point raised by certain members of the PSB staff in the form of a recommendation that this government should devote the necessary priority to such a project. In the course of their inquiry, Admiral  and Dr.  talked to the individuals mentioned in the second paragraph, who are believed to be the most knowledgeable American scientists in the field. This list includes top-ranking scientists from Cal Tech and MIT, as well as the Office of Naval Research, etc. Dr. DuBridge is a Director of the Rand Corporation. 25X1
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9.					The conclusions of Admiral  and Dr.  are set forth in the attached memorandum and are, in general, quite negative. Admiral  enlarged upon the contents of para. 7, stating that in his opinion the adverse psychological effect would possibly outweigh the favorable effect. Hostile propaganda would certainly seize upon any such effort as this on our part as a further act of American aggressiveness and intimidation. Mr. Palmer Putnam of the PSB maintains the other side of this argument. 25X1
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